



## Are you Aware? *for Attorneys*

### CM/ECF Awareness and Communications

February 11, 2005

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#### **PREPARING FOR ECF**

##### **Setting Up Acrobat Reader**

In order to view documents that have been electronically filed on the system, you must at least have Adobe Acrobat Reader. Acrobat Reader is free from Adobe (go to [www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readmain.html](http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readmain.html)). Follow the directions to install it.

##### **Portable Document Format (PDF)**

Only PDF (Portable Document Format) documents can be filed with the Court using the ECF system. Before sending the file to the court, you may want to preview the PDF document to be sure that it's all there and in the proper format. You also might want to make sure it's the right document.

##### **So How Do I View a PDF File?**

1. Start the Adobe Acrobat (Reader or Writer) program.
2. Click on "File" and choose Open.
3. Click on "Look In" to find the correct location to look in. Then click on the file name of the document to be viewed.
4. If the file is in PDF format, Adobe Acrobat will load the file and display it on the screen.

5. If the document is larger than the screen or has more than one page, you can use the scroll bars to move through the document or the arrows at the bottom to go to the next or previous page. (*For other viewing options, click on "View" then choose the option most appropriate for the document and your screen.*)

*To view a PDF file on your computer, double-click on the document file. If your computer is set up correctly, the file will automatically open in Adobe Acrobat.*

##### **How to Convert Documents to PDF Format**

You must convert all of your documents to PDF format before filing them in the Court's Electronic Case Filing (ECF) system. This process requires special software such as Adobe Acrobat Writer or FinePrint pdfFactory unless you're using WordPerfect versions 9, 10 or 11. These versions have Acrobat Writer built-in and can be used to convert documents to PDF.

##### ***Using any word processing program***

1. Install Acrobat Writer or FinePrint pdfFactory on your computer. (Follow the instructions provided by the manufacturer.)
2. Open the document to be converted in your word processor.

3. Select the Print option – usually found in the File menu. A dialog box will come up. Select the option to change the current printer. A drop down menu with a list of printer choices should be displayed. *(NOTE: If you're using WordPerfect, you can choose "Publish to PDF" rather than print, and follow the directions.)*

4. Select Adobe PDF Writer, or FinePrint pdfFactory, from within your word processing software. *(In order for Adobe PDFWriter or pdfFactory to appear, you must already have them installed on your computer. See Step 1.)*

5. "Print" the file. The file will not actually print. Instead a dialog box will pop up allowing you to save the file as a PDF file. *Note: Make a note of the file location so you can find the document later when you are ready to upload it. Change the location if necessary by clicking in the "Save in" area of the window.*

6. Name the file, make sure it ends with ".PDF" and click the [Save] button.

If you're using a standard word processing program (read Word or WordPerfect), all of the above steps should work for you. If you're using some off-the-wall word processor, the printer selection option may be found somewhere else. Once you find it, change the printer to Adobe PDFWriter, and follow the directions above.

## Basics

### What I'm Allowed to Do (User Interactions)

There are three basic types of user interactions allowed by the ECF system. They are:

- Entering information in fields
- Using buttons to direct system activities
- Mouse-clicking on hyperlinks

### How I'll Know Which "Interaction" It Is

- Information you are to enter into a field is shown enclosed in angle brackets like this <information to be entered>.
- Hyperlinks to click on are represented in **underlined boldface type**.

### Error. . . Error . . . Error

A document filed incorrectly in a case may result from posting the wrong PDF file to a docket entry; selecting the wrong document type from the menu; or possibly entering the wrong case number and not discovering the error before completing the transaction.

You will be notified if you need to re-file the document.

The ECF system does not permit you to change the misfiled document(s) or incorrect docket entry after the transaction has been accepted.

### Viewing Transaction Log

This feature, found in the **Utilities** menu, will allow you to review all transactions ECF has processed with your login and password. If you suspect someone is using your login without your permission, change your password immediately.

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